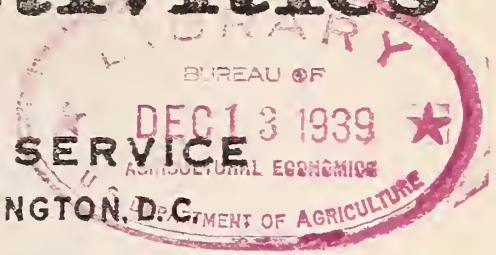


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Marketing Activities

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MARKETING OFFICIALS HOLDS ANNUAL CONVENTION IN FLORIDA

Marketing Officials and Guests Represent 16 States in Tour of
Important Shipping Regions and Points of Scenic Interest
-- Inspections of Marketing Facilities Alternated
With Discussion Sessions of Group

First-hand studies of large-scale production and handling methods in Florida fruit and vegetable producing areas occupied a prominent place on the program arranged for the Twenty-first Annual Convention of the National Association of Marketing Officials held in Florida November 13-18. The business sessions and discussions of the group were alternated with inspection visits to producing areas, packing plants, and shipping point wholesale markets. In addition to an especially constructive program, the week provided ample time for the entertainment provided by the several organizations acting as hosts to the out-of-State marketing officials.

Opening Sessions in Jacksonville

President S. B. Shaw, Chief of the Maryland State Department of Markets, keynoted the week's discussion topics in his remarks at the opening sessions in Jacksonville Monday morning. Mr. Shaw discussed the new factors in distribution, including changes brought about in the marketing of perishable food products by improved highway and transportation facilities, and the wide diversity of both State and Federal legislation affecting the movement of perishable produce from producers to consumers.

"We all know the many changes that have taken place in the marketing and distribution of perishable food products," Mr. Shaw said. "Improved highway and transportation facilities have been largely responsible for reducing the time distance between producing and consuming centers. Destination points have been multiplied and terminal facilities in our larger markets have become inadequate."

Mr. Webster J. Birdsall, Director of the New York State Bureau of Markets, led the morning round table discussion of factors to be emphasized in future State vegetable marketing programs.

Conventions of the National Association of Marketing Officials bring together each year representatives of State departments of agriculture, State marketing bureaus, and Federal agencies in charge of marketing work. The discussions at these conventions help to establish a clearer understanding of State and Federal marketing problems, and assist in the promotion of orderly uniform marketing programs. For these reasons, the December issue of Marketing Activities is largely devoted to the proceedings of the Twenty-first Annual Convention held at Jacksonville, Florida, last month. See page 85 for information on turkey production and consumption trends.

Mr. N. S. Nichols, Supervisor of the Tennessee Division of Markets, pointed out that in future marketing programs more emphasis must be placed upon improved production methods and higher quality market products. Mr. Nichols said, "Not enough stress is being put on the production end of our present marketing system. Our State divisions and bureaus of markets have clung to the idea that they were set up as law enforcement agencies to cooperate with the Agricultural Marketing Service in market news and Federal-State grading services, and possibly the publication of bulletins for the State Department of Agriculture. Perhaps with the funds and personnel now available that is about all we can do, but there is no question about the proper place for the production of a quality product in the marketing program -- it comes first. Our State bureaus and divisions of markets should take some responsibility for the production of better quality products in our respective States. We know that the agencies carrying on this work will welcome our assistance and cooperation."

Standardization Problems Studied

Mr. W. Dale Hilbish, Chief of the Ohio Bureau of Markets, stressed the need for simplification of both State and Federal grade standards, and the need for revising the standards in order that they may carry through to consumers. "There are 50 or more Federal grades for the same number of fruits and vegetables," Mr. Hilbish said, "yet there is no correlation of grade designations. At the present time the consumer has three buying guides -- size, appearance, and price -- and none of these is reliable as an indication of quality. The only yardstick we have for measuring quality is grade, and our grades, while comparatively satisfactory for producers and distributors, are not satisfactory for consumers."

"By correlating and reducing the number of grade designations to comparatively few, thereby making the grade designations of all products -- meats, eggs, fruits and vegetables -- stand for the same quality of each commodity, consumers and other interested parties could easily learn and associate one grade with another and buy the quality that best fits their idea of thrift, economy and income."

Commenting further upon standardization problems, J. H. Meek, Director of the Virginia Division of Markets, commended producers for the splendid job they have done in turning out packages adapted to wholesale trading in their produce. "But these efforts toward standardization should be extended," said Mr. Meek, "to include more detailed grading on the producers' end, and to carry official inspection for grade through all channels of distribution up to the consumer. I especially commend Mr. Nichols' suggestion that we simplify our arrangement of grades and grade terms so that consumers may identify quality with much less effort than is necessary at present, and in this manner be able to purchase by grade, and with confidence."

Mr. Meek explained the use of red and blue labels on Virginia State-inspected products so that consumers may use label colors as indicative of quality. He explained that use of the blue label is confined to products of highest quality, whereas red is used on qualities below the first grade. "By standardizing our color scheme," said Mr. Meek, "the consumer may select quality by the color of the label. The official State-Federal stamp on the label gives assurance that the quality is as represented."

New Jersey's "6-Point" Program

Mr. Warren W. Oley, Chief of the New Jersey Bureau of Markets, outlined the New Jersey program which has built up a six-point marketing plan for growers and buyers of New Jersey produce. Mr. Oley listed the points in the New Jersey plan as follows:

1. The development of shipping-point markets. In New Jersey these are chiefly auction markets.
2. The development of city farmers' markets and improvements in terminal markets.
3. An adequate market news service.
4. The development of grades and standards.
5. Uniformity in packages.
6. Publicity.

Mr. Oley stated that growers whose markets are near consuming centers operate under a handicap in their efforts toward grade standardization. "The cost of transportation to market is so small," Mr. Oley said, "that these growers feel, in many instances, that it does not pay to grade their vegetables, as contrasted with the necessity for grading in areas where transportation costs are materially higher. In fact, local buyers who purchase from a few to a thousand or more packages two or three times a week often discourage careful grading."

Mr. C. M. White, Chief of the Maine Bureau of Markets, was unable to attend the convention sessions, but sent a paper which was presented by Benjamin P. Storrs, of the Connecticut Bureau of Markets. Mr. Storrs emphasized Mr. White's comment on studies made last winter regarding the packaging of potatoes in paper consumer containers. "Mr. White points out," said Mr. Storrs, "that these studies by the Association of American Railways through its Container Bureau developed some extremely valuable information. All phases of the question were not covered, however, and it is recommended that this type of work be continued with special emphasis on temperature and moisture factors."

Mr. F. G. Robb, of the Agricultural Marketing Service, commented upon Mr. Storrs' remarks by saying that for several years the Agricultural Marketing Service has been giving considerable thought and attention to consumer packages and standards. "This past season," said Mr. Robb, "approximately 17 percent of the potatoes shipped from Maine were in consumer packages and graded according to the U. S. Standards. This represents an increasing volume of Maine potatoes which are going to consumers in original packages marked with the U. S. grade of the contents of each container. Until the past few years this has not been done and our grades have not generally carried through to retail purchases. We recognize many difficulties, however, in establishing consumer packages for the more highly perishable fruits and vegetables, as they do not carry through to consumers in such a way as to deliver the same grade as was packed by the producer or shipping organization."

Mr. Robb discussed the work now being done by the Agricultural Marketing Service in Chicago in studying potato grades from the consumer's viewpoint. "The Service now has two men on the Chicago market who are tracing potatoes from the time they arrive on the Chicago market until they are purchased by the housewife," said Mr. Robb. "The purpose of these studies is to determine the extent to which the grades carry through to the final buyer and to ascertain consumer preferences. Our men on the Chicago market seek to find what sizes and varieties of potatoes consumers want, and what they will pay for them. We need this basic information, if we are effectively to carry standardization to consumers."

Marketing Service Chief Comments

Mr. C. W. Kitchen, Chief of the Agricultural Marketing Service, stressed the necessity for cooperative work between the Service and the various States. "We are impressed," said Mr. Kitchen, "with the emphasis placed upon the need for getting closer to consumers of perishable farm products. In this work we need more educational effort to show that our marketing problems go far beyond the farm producer and just what extension of our efforts will do for the producer." Mr. Kitchen pointed out that in its standardization work with the more perishable farm crops, the Agricultural Marketing Service has no authority to require the use of its grades, as it does with grains and some other farm products sold in interstate commerce. "We can put grades for the perishable products into effect," said Mr. Kitchen, "only so far as growers and marketing agencies may wish and request."

Monday Afternoon Meeting

Mr. George E. Prince, Director of the South Carolina Division of Markets, led a Monday afternoon round table discussion of factors to be emphasized in future State marketing programs for fruits. The general problems discussed at the afternoon session followed very closely those emphasized in the morning meeting on vegetable problems. The afternoon discussions were handled by S. W. Hiatt, Florida Marketing Specialist, R. B. Etheridge, of the North Carolina Division of Markets, and H. A. Dwinell, Director of the Vermont Division of Markets.

Mr. Hiatt emphasized the need for greater interest and action by producers themselves, if the fruit industry for the country as a whole is to be maintained on a profitable basis.

H. A. Dwinell discussed what he called "a definite trend in New England toward collective buying of local products by chain organizations. The first step in this type of project," he said, "is the establishment of some sort of clearing house to receive the orders and to allocate them to producers. In Vermont we have a State-wide maple cooperative, which is functioning in this capacity for the local distribution of potatoes, squash, apples, and some other products to the principal chains. The turkey growers' cooperatives are now organizing a similar project for the distribution of their turkeys through chains this season. It is likely, however, that the fullest benefits of these projects will not be realized until the second stage -- organized centralized packing and storing facilities -- is reached."

Advertising Farm Products

R. B. Etheridge recommended that merchandising and marketing programs for fruits provide necessary expenditures for advertising. "We need to inform buyers," said Mr. Etheridge, "as to what producers have to sell, and to convince prospective buyers that the products offered are equal, if not superior in quality, to the products being marketed from competitive producing areas." He pointed out that this important aid to the successful marketing of farm and orchard products has been neglected.

Mr. G. V. Branch, who is in charge of municipal markets in the City of Detroit, reviewed a number of the problems he has encountered in Detroit, and the steps that have been taken to effect their solution. He explained the operation of the Michigan State Apple Commission, which is authorized to collect 1¢ per bushel on all Michigan apples sold. The proceeds from this tax are used for advertising Michigan apples.

S. S. Rogers of the California Department of Agriculture, reported that California producers have been forced, by their distance from consuming markets, to adhere to "very rigid standardization" of their products. "This has been necessary," said Mr. Rogers, "in order that our products may reach distant markets in condition to sell to the best advantage. In California we are very much interested in State laws affecting our produce, because we ship probably 40 percent of our

production for diversion, without knowing its ultimate destination. The existing confusion of State laws makes our marketing problem extremely complex. We are interested in obtaining uniformity in the laws which affect the movement and sale of so many of our products.

H. S. Moles, of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture, pointed out that last year's shipments of Louisiana Puerto Rico sweetpotatoes totaled approximately 4,100 cars. "Of these," said Mr. Moles, "more than 3,000 cars were graded as No. 1. Our No. 1 sweetpotatoes are marketed in crates, but our No. 2 stock is packaged in 100-pound sacks. These are sold largely to motortruck buyers who took between 1,000 and 1,500 cars of our sweetpotatoes this past season. The culls are taken home for stock feed and are not shipped."

The Consumers' Viewpoint

Mrs. Lottie Randolph, Assistant to the Ohio Commissioner of Agriculture, commended the efforts being made toward consumer education. "In Ohio," said Mrs. Randolph, "we have recognized consumer education as a major problem. We have 18 or 20 consumer organizations in what is called our Consumers' Institute. At our meetings we have discussed the same problems you have treated today, and we are greatly interested in further efforts toward standardization on a basis that will appeal more strongly to consumers."

Mrs. Randolph extended her remarks by saying, "We women admit that we buy on emotional appeal, but we are definitely interested in quality. I have been greatly interested in Mr. Meek's color labels, and feel that the use of color as a guide to consumer buying can be of real value to our housewives. Our consumers want to know how to read and understand the labels on the products they buy."

Commissioner L. M. Rhodes of Florida, honorary life president of the National Association, commented on Mrs. Randolph's remarks by saying, "I think we are just now getting to our problem. We have been trying to get Northerners to eat our green citrus fruit, but we have not succeeded even when we have loaded our product with attractive coloring material." He stated that producers in all areas can take no better action than to try to give consumers what they want. "Our Florida shippers," he said, "lose 10 million dollars each year by shipping fruit that is not fit to eat."

L. A. Webster of the Massachusetts Division of Markets discussed the work of his division in distributing recipes and other educational material for consumers, in an effort to coordinate merchandising programs with the movement of surplus farm products. "This type of work is giving excellent results in moving a portion of our present surplus of winter squash," he said. "Also our daily broadcasts of radio market news are informing growers of market conditions and price changes. Each day prior to 6:35 a.m. our market inspector gives prices to one of our radio stations. At 6:45 these prices are broadcast. In this manner, farmers who wish to tune in on these radio reports may know which items are in good demand. They have the information soon enough to start shipments to market the same, or the following, day."

Distribution Must Be Widespread

Mr. M. C. Gay of the Federal Farm Credit Administration said, "The fundamentals of distribution include reaching the consumer by advertising and in other ways. I believe we need to determine whether our distribution shall be to the many, or to the few. The country has just so much income, and it is my belief that we need to reach as many consumers as possible if we are to take advantage of the maximum portion of this income. More and more people are beginning to see the need for linking production with their marketing programs, and for carefully planning advertising in connection with their merchandising and sales promotional work."

Mr. George E. Prince summarized the discussion of vegetable marketing problems as follows: "We have mentioned the need for cutting costs between producers and consumers. It has been brought out that more cooperative purchasing will aid farmers in widening the spread between production costs and sales income. Quality production has been stressed, but not much has been said of the need for coordinating quality with our marketing efforts. Our inspectors in South Carolina often help our growers who are having difficulty in making the more desirable grades for their produce. They inform county agents as to the growers who, with a little help, might materially improve the grade and pack of their products and thus obtain better returns for their crops. The county agents work with production specialists and marketing specialists in aiding these growers toward better production and handling methods."

Tuesday Evening Meeting

Chairman Luther Chandler of the Florida Citrus Commission welcomed the visiting marketing officials and their guests at the Tuesday evening banquet given at Tampa in honor of the visitors by the Citrus Commission. "This year," said Mr. Chandler, "we plan to ship 52 million boxes of citrus, part as fresh fruit and part as canned fruit and juices." He outlined the creation of the Citrus Commission for administering the maturity, advertising, and other laws affecting Florida citrus fruits. He pointed out that the Commission members served without salaries in the interest of the citrus industry of the State.

L. W. Marvin, Advertising Manager for the Commission, described the operation of the Florida advertising assessments. "Under our laws," said Mr. Marvin, "assessments of 3 cents per field box on grapefruit, 1 cent on oranges, and 5 cents on tangerines, are charged against all fruit marketed. The money obtained from these assessments is used in advertising and sales promotion in an effort to return a fair profit on our citrus fruits. As part of our promotional work we maintain 12 field men. These men contact distributors who handle Florida fruit and explain to them our advertising schedules, and the objectives of our sales campaigns. This enables dealers to cooperate in these campaigns for expanding the markets for Florida citrus. We are now entering our fiftieth year of this type of work and I believe it is generally acknowledged that we are doing a good job for our industry."

Grapefruit Marketing A Large Problem

Mr. Marvin pointed out that the citrus industry is greatly indebted to the medical profession for its assistance in extolling the virtues of oranges and orange juice as products containing elements of vital importance to the demands of good health. "Unfortunately," he said, "this cooperation has not yet extended to grapefruit, which has become our chief problem in Florida. We are doing what we can to spread the knowledge of the health-giving properties of grapefruit, both in this country and in England. Our British customers are using increasing quantities of our canned grapefruit and are materially helping our marketing problem.

Secretary Chastain of the Commission discussed the fundamental points in other laws dealing with Florida citrus fruits. These laws require inspection and certification for maturity, standardization of grades and packs, and bonding and licensing of dealers and shippers who operate in Florida. Mr. Chastain brought out the point that these laws apply to fruit used in the canneries as well as citrus shipped for consumption in the fresh state.

Cy Denman, Agricultural Counsel of the National Association of Food Chains, discussed the factors to be considered at terminal markets where citrus fruits are handled. Mr. Denman urged full cooperation among citrus growers in controlling the marketing of their crops. "I am not trying to fix responsibility for good or bad distribution," said Mr. Denman, "I merely want to point out the necessity of industry-wide cooperation if best results are to be obtained." Mr. Denman listed his five suggestions to citrus growers as follows:

Suggestions to Citrus Growers

"First, good grower cooperative organizations to provide leadership.

"Second, coordination of efforts of groups within each producing section, and cooperation between the different areas. These sum up to orderly marketing, the first requisite of good terminal market conditions.

"Third, joint cooperation between producer groups and distributor groups -- with a banishment of the 'lone wolf' idea by any element.

"Fourth, recognition that the consumer is Queen, and that there are many courting her favor in the food market.

"Fifth, necessity for sound programs of promotion embracing all elements in the industry; and recognition by growers that, primarily, it is their own responsibility to develop the market for their wares; that no one else will do as good a job for them; and that if a proper share of the Nation's wealth is to come back to agriculture, it will come through organization and cooperative effort."

Problems of Vegetable Growers

Tuesday's discussions at Clewiston considered country-point and terminal vegetable markets. John R. Van Arnum, Traffic Manager of the National League of Wholesale Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Distributors, commented on the problems confronting vegetable growers and shippers at terminal markets. Mr. Van Arnum criticized what he called "the indefensible mixed-car rule of the railroads which provides that the highest rate on any article in a car and the highest minimum weight of any article or any other article in car governs freight charges on the entire shipment." Mr. Van Arnum said, "If lettuce, generally one of the highest rated articles in the fruit and vegetable group, and white potatoes, one of the highest minimum weight articles, were loaded in the same car, the freight rate charges would be that of lettuce applied to the white potato minimum weight.

"At cities or towns in the trade area of a terminal market, which could not handle straight carloads of most commodities, the resulting freight charges would be so excessive that distributors could do better by buying in the terminal market and trucking or paying the mixed-car charges for the short haul to their city, than to buy mixed cars of two or more articles direct from producing areas."

Mr. Van Arnum recommended that some steps be taken to correct the results of railroad competition which have indirectly or directly split terminal markets into rival factions, and urged the elimination of false damage claims, price-clipping, and other unfair practices on terminal markets. He stressed the need for consolidation of markets in some cities and for the provision of more adequate physical facilities to accommodate the increasing volume of traffic in perishable products.

Efficient Marketing and Efficient Production

Dr. C. V. Noble, Agricultural Economist at the University of Florida, believed that efficient marketing begins with efficient production. "The logical planning of acreage of each vegetable crop to supply the prospective demand is the first factor to be considered at each country point," he said, "and acreages should be planned well in advance of planting time. Growers and shippers need data on acreages, volumes marketed and prices received in previous years -- and they need the best estimate obtainable on prospective demand for the season ahead.

Dr. Noble commented on the emphasis given to production of quality products and the preparation of these products for market. "We need to consider," he said, "if they shall be shipped in 'full dress', or 'plain clothes', or 'naked'. Every consumer desires clean vegetables put up in neat and attractive packages, but is he willing to pay the full costs of the additional dressing? The vital factor to the grower is his net returns for his product. Too many of the comparative price data

are on the basis of market price and not grower price. All too frequently growers report that their net return per unit has been greater from bulk shipments than from packaged goods. Certainly much more study needs to be given to the economics of packing vegetables from the standpoint of the grower.

Dr. Noble summarized his recommendations as follows:

"Plan for the proper volume of vegetables; distribute the acreage where it can be most economically produced; improve quality and prepare vegetables for market in the manner to bring the greatest net return to growers; control by the grower of his product until sale is consummated. Progress has been made, but much needs to be done. Voluntary cooperation is the first step. After growers have learned the real benefits of working together, legal cooperatives are in order.

"Finally, the weather may upset the best man-made plans. Also, water, wind, or frost at times make great changes in truck crop prospects overnight, but this should increase rather than decrease growers' zeal for wise planning."

Closing Business Sessions

As a preliminary to the business sessions held at Miami on Friday, Federal-State relationships were discussed by the marketing officials with representatives of the various Federal agencies having to do with marketing problems. President Shaw asked that the marketing officials and Federal representatives handle their discussions frankly and in a way that would enable all of them to continue their efforts so as to be most productive of benefits to both growers and other agencies affected by State and Federal marketing activities.

C. W. Kitchen of the Agricultural Marketing Service discussed cooperative agreements now in effect with the various State agencies and a few nonmerchandising organizations. "We have had more discussion of our inspection service than almost any other phase of our cooperative activities," said Mr. Kitchen. He pointed out that the Agricultural Marketing Service now has agreements covering shipping point inspections in 44 States. During the past year more than 450 thousand cars of fruits and vegetables were inspected under these cooperative arrangements.

"It is necessary in this work," said Mr. Kitchen, "that our agreements be made and handled in a way that will protect the integrity of our certificates and of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. We have had some requests that interpretation of the U. S. grades be made by State agencies. This is one point upon which we cannot and will not yield. If interpretations were made by the various State agencies instead of by one central agency as at present, we would soon return to the same state of confusion which existed under the old system of State grades and State grade interpretations."

In discussing cooperative agreements for handling market news services, Mr. Kitchen pointed out that it is the duty of the Federal Department to collect information that is of national interest. "We hope," he said, "that State agencies will supplement these efforts by securing information of local interest and distributing this information within their States. I should like very much to see this work expanded within the States which need the types of information not coming within the premise of the Federal agencies."

Extension Service Cooperation Discussed

Dr. W. C. Ockey of the Federal Extension Service, led that part of the discussion having to do with cooperation of the Extension Service and State marketing officials. Dr. Ockey outlined the ways in which the Extension Service is cooperating with State bureaus of markets as follows:

1. Increased educational work aimed at assisting growers to better understand grades for their products, and the desirability of standardization of products offered for sale.
2. Helping growers to determine the market demand for various products in order that they may develop their production and marketing practices.
3. Increased crop and market information necessary to enable growers to better plan their production and marketing operations.
4. A program relating to internal trade barriers with its two main phases: (a) Education and information, and (b) legislation.
5. Federal and State legislation pertaining to labelling of containers, elimination of low grades from the market, etc.

Dr. Ockey reviewed much of the cooperative work already under way with special emphasis on merchandising programs, consumer publicity, more effective standardization of grades and containers, and cooperation of the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation in its surplus removal efforts. "The Extension Service appreciates the need for cooperation and coordination of marketing activities," he said, "and wishes to increase its efforts with the State bureaus of markets in improving marketing methods and in bringing about solutions to marketing problems."

S. R. Smith of the Division of Marketing and Marketing Agreements, reviewed some of the problems encountered in working for orderly marketing of fruit and vegetable crops. "Growers call upon us," said Mr. Smith, "when they are in trouble and often just as more trouble is about to develop. This is rather unfortunate; to be most effective our programs should be timely in their application. We urge growers not to wait until their marketing season is at hand before requesting cooperation from our agency."

J. H. Meek of Virginia asked that a committee on standardization be appointed to consider matters relating to grade standards, container standardization, and the interests of consumers in such standardization. Presented as a motion, the suggestion was seconded and passed. President Shaw named C. W. Kitchen, Agricultural Marketing Service, as chairman; Warren W. Oley, New Jersey; L. A. Webster, Massachusetts; C. H. Schulte, Illinois; and W. Dale Hilbish, Ohio, as members.

Officers were elected for the coming year as follows: H. A. Dwinell, Vermont, president; Dr. Theodore Macklin, California, vice-president; and Warren W. Oley, New Jersey, secretary-treasurer. C. W. Kitchen of the Agricultural Marketing Service, and S. B. Shaw, retiring president of the Association, continue as members of the Executive Committee.

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LOUISIANA SPECIALISTS EXPERIMENT WITH FLAX

Flax in Louisiana! Research workers at the Louisiana State University Agricultural Experiment Station are investigating flax for Louisiana farmers. The first year's test indicates that it has distinct possibilities of providing Louisiana farmers with another source of income to supplement their other crops. A few experiments with flax were conducted in Louisiana years ago but no definite results were obtained then.

Dr. H. B. Brown, experiment station agronomist who is conducting the work, reports that flaxseed has been harvested this year at the rate of 11.5 bushels per acre from an experimental planting made last fall. This yield compares with an average of 5.9 bushels per acre for the United States for the 1928-37 period. The U. S. farm price has averaged about \$1.70 per bushel during the past 5 years.

Most of the flaxseed produced in this country comes from North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and States in the Pacific Northwest. Recently, considerable acreage of flax has been grown with fairly satisfactory results in Texas. Imports supply a large percentage of the flaxseed and linseed oil used in this country.

In the large commercial producing sections of this country flax is grown in the summer, but it will not stand the intense summer heat of Louisiana. As the plant grows best in cool weather, the experimental plantings in Louisiana are being made in the fall and the flax is harvested in the spring.

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The staple length of upland cotton ginned prior to November 14 continued to average a little shorter than the staple length of ginnings last year, and the grade was slightly lower.

TURKEY PRODUCTION TREND UPWARD
By S. A. Jones

Almost 32 million turkeys! This estimate of the 1939 turkey crop is a pleasant surprise to consumers. But the large crop this year was more or less expected by turkey raisers, for the trend of production has been steadily upward since 1929, when only 17 million birds were produced. And they are bigger and probably better turkeys now.

Now that turkeys are again abundant and relatively inexpensive, it is likely that as many or more turkeys are being consumed per capita during the holiday seasons than were consumed 50 years ago, when supplies were likewise heavy. In addition, a considerable consumption is being established during the remaining months of the year by public restaurants and dining rooms. This all-year-round demand takes care of a large volume of the heavier birds, and it helps to reduce the holiday surplus.

The increased production and consumption of turkeys, showing the details of the calculations, are illustrated by the following table:

TURKEY PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION FOR THE
UNITED STATES, 1929-39

Year	Number of turkeys produced	Average weight per bird in lb.	Total pounds produced	Pounds per Capita Production	Consumption <u>1/</u>
1929	16,536,000	13.2	218,275,200	1.8	1.8
1930	16,253,000	13.4	217,790,200	1.8	1.9
1931	17,493,000	13.6	237,904,800	1.9	1.8
1932	21,928,000	13.8	302,606,400	2.4	2.3
1933	22,827,000	14.0	319,578,000	2.5	2.6
1934	21,334,000	14.3	305,076,200	2.4	2.5
1935	20,308,000	14.5	294,466,000	2.3	2.3
1936	27,424,000	14.7	403,132,800	3.1	2.9
1937	25,308,000	14.8	374,558,400	2.9	3.0
1938	25,968,000	14.8	384,326,400	3.0	2.9
1939 <u>2/</u>	31,650,000	15.0	474,750,000	3.6	

1/ Allows for annual changes in farm inventory, cold storage holdings, and foreign trade.

2/ Preliminary, based on September 1 farm holdings of turkeys and approximate Census trend in human population.

The table shows that the average weight per bird has steadily increased, rising from 13.2 pounds in 1929 to a weight of 15.0 pounds in 1939.

It will be noted also that the per capita consumption sometimes exceeds the per capita production and vice versa. This apparent inconsistency is due to the variation in the supply of turkeys carried over from one season to another in cold storage, to annual changes in farm inventory, and to foreign trade. These factors are not yet available for the 1939 crop, but per capita consumption is estimated to be approximately 3.6 pounds.

To get the complete story behind the increasing production and consumption of turkeys, it is necessary to go back to 1927. Turkey production and consumption that year probably reached an all-time low point. This was not due to any lack of demand; the supply was limited. Prices received by producers in 1927 were high, averaging 31.5 cents per pound, compared with 15.3 cents reported on October 15 this year.

The low production in 1927 marked the culmination of a 30-year period during which the poultry disease known as "Blackhead" had become widely spread. The first infection was noted in the New England States and it spread from that section to all parts of the country. Blackhead is very destructive to young turkeys and its ravages are particularly severe in humid areas. Its increasing prevalence finally made turkey production so unprofitable in the eastern portions of the United States as to greatly reduce production there. In the drier areas farther west, production during this period was increasing rapidly, but not in a volume proportionate to the decrease in the East.

Meantime, the consuming population was rapidly increasing. By the latter part of the 1920's, the knowledge of newer methods of handling turkeys so as to overcome the extreme losses of poults, even in the humid East, had become sufficiently diffused to turn the tide. Turkey production in the eastern half of the United States began to recover. This movement has continued with increasing momentum up to the present time.

(Note: Mr. Jones is in charge of poultry and egg production estimates of the Agricultural Marketing Service.)

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5,000 DOZEN EGGS BRING TOP PRICES IN FIRST AUCTION

Sixty-two thousand eggs were sold at Yorkville, Illinois, November 16 with all the glamour and the drama that accompanies the chattering tobacco auctioneer, or the selling to the highest bidder of pies at old-fashioned pie suppers. The unusual occasion was the selling by auction of the first voluminous concentration of Government graded eggs in Illinois at the recently organized Yorkville Poultry and Egg Auction, the first of its kind in the State. The auction was organized by the University of Illinois and farm advisers in 13 northern Illinois counties.

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